societies

MDPI

Article

"Let Them Make It Rain and Bling": Unveiling Community Expectations towards Returned Migrants in Cameroon

Presca Wanki *, Ilse Derluyn and Ine Lietaert

Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy, Ghent University, Henri Dunantlaan 2, 9000 Ghent, Belgium; ilse.derluyn@ugent.be (I.D.); ine.lietaert@ugent.be (I.L.)
* Correspondence: presca.wanki@ugent.be

Abstract: In Africa, international migration to the Global North is often interpreted as a means to achieve upward social mobility. This article highlights the importance of considering the socio-economic and political transformations that form migration aspirations, especially among African youths. Simultaneously, increasing restrictive migration regimes impacts the extent to which migrants can meet the clauses in the moral economy of migration in their origin communities. We focus on (Anglophone) Cameroon, where international migration is referred to as "bushfalling". A person who migrates to a Western society desires or is expected to return home to share the wealth he/she has accumulated. This interpretation of migration forms different perspectives regarding migrants and guides expectations towards returned migrants. However, little is known on how these expectations are defined and redefined in the society of return. Based on focus group discussions conducted among local community members, we show that the expectations were guided by the visa regimes of destination countries. Moreover, successful returnees were defined by their ability to be visible and create an impact after return. Thus, this article contributes more broadly to an African perspective on the meaning and impact of return migration.

Keywords: bushfalling; Cameroon; community expectations; return migration

Citation: Wanki, P.; Derluyn, I.; Lietaert, I. "Let Them Make It Rain and Bling": Unveiling Community Expectations towards Returned Migrants in Cameroon. *Societies* **2022**, *12*, 8. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc12010008

Academic Editor: Gregor Wolbring

Received: 29 October 2021
Accepted: 27 December 2021
Published: 5 January 2022

1. Introduction

Mobility has different meanings for different people, depending on the specific historical and social contexts in which it takes place [1]. It is thus embedded in socio-cultural imaginaries and values, economic settings, familiar and community dynamics, and politics and power relations [2–4].

In many African societies, migration is constructed as being natural, necessary [5], and a path to attaining increased social status [6,7]. Moreover, international mobility to the Global North is connected with social and collective hopes for a better life and future, with upward social mobility of the migrant and his/her relatives staying at home and with ideas of membership within a globalised world [7–10]. In this regard, migration has been explained in terms of a fulfilment of social obligations towards family members, as being embedded in intergenerational kinship where mobility is seen as a form of social security [9,11–13]. The clause included in this intergenerational contract stresses the traditional duty of the young to care for the old, as included in the principle of reciprocity [12]. The transnational social relations caused by the mobility clearly change kinship relationships between migrants and those who stayed behind, with accounts of entitlement, obligation and practices of economic solidarity as main characteristics—hence placing migrants as different socio-economic actors at the family and community level [6]. In terms of gender, migration has also been described as a means to enact or prepare for respectable adulthood and as an avenue for young men to establish themselves as independent, respectable and marriageable adults [9,14]. In other contexts, the mobility of women is constructed as a painful necessity [15], especially when they assume the breadwinning role [16].

Thus, research has clearly illustrated how a moral economy of migration instils specific expectations towards migrants regarding wealth accumulation, reciprocation of support over time, and fulfilment of particular social and gender role expectations [15,17]. Research has highlighted how such expectations not only shape decisions to leave the country [5,18,19] but also further migration trajectories since the expectations migrants face upon return might lead to postponing the actual return or prevent them from resettling in the home community [10,20]. While return migration is often an inherent part of migration trajectories and the reestablishment of social ties and availability of social support are crucial aspects of a migrants' return and reintegration processes [21], contextualised socio-cultural understandings of return migration, and relatedly, the expectations defined and redefined by communities in the particular society of return migration, have rarely been explored.

Despite the current context of increasingly restrictive mobility regimes imposed by the Global North, precarious migration journeys characterised by periods of waiting and uncertainty, combined with a moral economy of migration, may lead to a complication in the reception of migrants in the community in case of a premature halt to their journeys. This is especially relevant when there are frictions between the symbolism attached to the ideal type of successful return and the experiences of returnees. Research on the views towards returnees in Cape Verde, Somalia, and Afghanistan, for example, has shown that forced return (i.e., deportation) leads to stigmatisation within communities [22,23].

In most societies, "deportation" is associated with "criminal activities", creating the perception that deported persons do not deserve re-entry into social life; this complicates social contacts between returnees and their origin communities [22–24]. Scholars have argued that this negative reception within the community results from their inability to afford a particular "style" of return [25]. Indeed, in many societies, a successful return is measured in terms of economic accomplishment, especially when economic reasons were the primary motivation for the initial departure [20]. Returnees need to demonstrate this financial success by lavish spending, driving luxurious cars, donating vast sums of money to churches, and constructing houses [9,26]. This sharing of wealth, which includes gestures of hospitality or gift-giving, is pivotal to building up their social status [14]. Hence, Bredeloup [8] and Miller [27] rightly pointed out that returnees are confronted with obligations to succeed in accordance with a collective imagination of migration. If not, moral judgements are measured out quickly, and they face rejection by their community. However, a study in Ghana indicates that the impact of the return on the livelihood of the family is more important than the legal mode of return [9,17]. By returning empty-handed, the migrant had failed to realise the migration goals. This had dire consequences on the social relations at the family level, creating a sense of shame and social inadequacy for the migrant who became a burden for his family he had set out to support through migration.

Further, as illustrated, migration expectations operate in the context of social norms incorporating gender roles, suggesting that female returnees will be judged differently than male returnees [28,29]. Nevertheless, empirical studies indicate that all migrants, regardless of their gender, are expected to support those who stayed behind [10], with men receiving requests for investments requiring substantial amounts of capital and women being obliged to remit mostly for immediate consumption [6]. This makes it crucial to investigate further if and how gender plays a role in expectations towards returnees. Moreover, restarting a living in the country of return, finding one's place in society and being accepted within the community are social and relational processes influenced by the individual returnee, as by the community (s)he is returning to [30,31].

Therefore, we argue that more insight is needed into the role of communities in return processes, particularly regarding their expectations towards returnees. More clarity is required in what exactly is expected from returnees, which contribution is necessary for returnees to fulfil their social obligations, and how gender and the mode of return interact with community members' expectations. These findings may shed light on why some returned migrants face difficulties in their reintegration processes. Moreover, this

will help further the understanding of the ways socially shared meanings of migration are (re)produced at the level of the community after return [32]. This will be addressed in the context of return to Cameroon. In this society, the metaphor of "bushfalling" is widely used to refer to international migration and interestingly comprises expectations and obligations for migrants to return to the place of departure to share the wealth that (s)he has accumulated. Due to the socio-economic and political transformations in Cameroon, we pinpoint that that Anglophone Cameroonians felt increasingly marginalised [33], which exacerbated aspirations for international migration. Hence, analysing the socio-cultural notion of bushfalling allows us to reveal new economic roles ascribed to migrants and their translation to high expectations towards returnees.

2. Understanding International Migration from (Anglophone) Cameroon

Researchers have highlighted how international migration from Cameroon can be understood by disentangling two major conjunctures: the political liberalisation and the economic crisis in the 1980s and 1990s. These periods had grave consequences on the sustainable livelihood of Cameroonians, which is still evident today. On the one hand, political liberalisation in Cameroon gave birth to what has been called "the anglophone problem" [34]. This can be traced back to 1961 when the political elites of French Cameroon and English Cameroon favoured the formation of a federal state. However, this agreement did not go as planned, as it was interpreted as a means to integrate the anglophone region into a strong centralised unitary state. Subsequently, this led to feelings of marginalisation and exploitation among Anglophone Cameroonians by the French-dominated state. Thus, Anglophone Cameroonians assess their chances of success as higher far away from Cameroon [35]. In most cases, educational mobility through bushfalling is seen as a way of fulfilling their dreams for a better future [10,36].

On the other hand, the economic crisis in the 1980s—called *la crise*—disintegrated the socio-economic order [37]. Inherent in Cameroon's Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) agreement with the World Bank in 1988, there was an economic and political conditionality [38]. While the latter was related to processes of democratisation, the "economic conditionality" referred to the requirement of downsizing the state, which translated into "freezing employment opportunities in an economy in which the state was the main employer" [14,33]. This resulted in the reduction of civil servants' salaries and a 50 percent devaluation of the currency [37,39]. These changes led to mass unemployment at a rate between 15 percent and 30 percent, revealing the constraints on the government's capacity to provide jobs to young graduates [40]. As a result, the everyday lives of Cameroonians became too uncertain, thus leaving many people distressed about the present day and fearful for the future [37,41]. This was unlike earlier generations that came of age in the 1960s and 1970s, where there was a transition from school to the job market [42]. Consequently, with the disappearance of transitional pathways for youths, political and economic uncertainty turned into a new kind of social uncertainty for young people [33]. As such, international migration was seen as means to attain a bright future.

Despite the "double marginalisation" as youths and as Anglophones voiced by young Anglophone Cameroonians, most young Cameroonians share several vital concerns: unemployment, underemployment, and socio-economic uncertainty [43]. This uncertainty, as a crisis, became "routinised" in Cameroon and ceased to surprise people in and how they define themselves [41]. In this way, Cameroon's postcolonial state is seen as a stumbling block of youths' transition to social adulthood [43]. Therefore, being faced with an uncertain future, it is little wonder an increasing number of young Cameroonians and Africans more broadly opt for international migration.

In the case of Anglophone Cameroon, the metaphor of "bushfalling" is widely used to refer to international migration and comprises a fundamental part of the culture and society [10,44,45]. The terminology of bushfalling became popular in Cameroon in the 1990s and referred to "the act of going to the wilderness (i.e., the bush) to hunt down meat (i.e., money) and bring back home the trophies" [18,44]. Thus, this socio-cultural

understanding of migration imbues a complex web of expectations and obligations for those people going to the "bush". More so, scholars such as Alpes [18], Nyamnjoh [44], and Pelican [45] have shown the metaphorical strength of bushfalling in understanding migration aspirations and its profitability through remittances. Recent literature, however, revealed the "slipperiness" of the notion of bushfalling, involving different and sometimes contradictory understandings of what it means and how it should be performed [10]. In this article, we fill the gap in the different bodies of literature on migration from Cameroon by giving an empirical analysis on how the notion of bushfalling is interpreted and evaluated after return. Therefore, by investigating the concrete expectations of local community members towards people returning to (Anglophone) Cameroon, this article contributes more broadly to an African perspective on the meaning and impact of return migration.

3. Methods

The data for this study were obtained using focus group discussions in two English-speaking communities in Cameroon (Buea[1] and Yaoundé[2]) between February to April 2019. Although Yaoundé is predominantly French-speaking, it is an entry point for Anglophone returnees because some were raised in Yaoundé, had worked there before migration, or had job offers there after their return[3]. Thus, insights into community expectations towards returnees could be collected in English-speaking communities in Yaoundé instead of the neighbouring English-speaking town (Bamenda), which was inaccessible due to security concerns. Yet, since a community is experienced differently by people with diverse backgrounds, it is important to clarify our understanding of the concept [46–48]. The term community can be used in two major ways: first, a geographical notion of community defines it over a geographical space (neighbourhoods, town, city), consisting of physical boundaries, with usually some type of social interaction or common tie [49]. The second approach determines a community as a "relational" matter and, as such, is primarily concerned with the "quality of character of human relationship, without reference to location" [50] (p. 8). This research combines the geographical as well as a relational sense of community, which translates into the use of three main characteristics of a community: (1) common location, (2) social support and interaction during lifecycle events such as birth, marriage, and death, and (3) interdependencies involving an incentive to reciprocate, which include but are not limited to the sharing of resources and ideas with each other.

To understand the perspectives of local community members towards returned migrants, six focus group discussions were conducted. This is because, more than face-to-face interviews, focus groups can reveal unspoken but shared ideas about social phenomena [51,52]. This generates rich data, rendering it possible to see how knowledge is constituted in a group context, as participants are likely to question each other, ask for clarifications, and laugh at or contest a remark [53]. Moreover, according to Farnsworth and Boon [53], this will enable the researcher to analyse "how the participants are talking, how their viewpoints are maintained, reinforced, modified, or rejected during the interaction between participants" (p. 610). As such, to illustrate the dynamics within group discussions, we use pseudonyms to identify the participant raising a view and/or how other participants added to or ignored specific comments.

For this study, in each city, Buea and Yaoundé, three neighbourhoods were selected. In each neighbourhood, we conducted separate focus groups of men, women, and youths to avoid the possible influence of power relations that can be at stake in mixed groups but simultaneously include the possible diverse perspectives according to participants' gender and age. Youths in this study were defined in line with the Cameroon national youth policy as people between 15–35 years.

In order to conduct the focus group discussions, the first author of this paper collaborated with a research assistant familiar with the research sites, a person who had research experience in a local non-profit organisation and was trained further by the first author in research methods and ethics. The research assistant identified a community leader who functioned as a "gatekeeper" in selecting 8 to 10 participants in the different neighbour-

hoods. After a first introductory meeting, the gatekeeper organized a community gathering where the research team (first author and research assistant) presented the research project and asked those interested in participating to stay. Among those who opted to join, all were familiar with bushfalling and knew at least one person abroad (either a neighbour, friend, or family member). In total, we had 56 participants. There were 20 women between the ages of 35 and 51, and their level of education ranged from primary level to bachelor's degree. Their occupation ranged from housewives to civil service employees to unemployed university graduates. Three were not married. There were 18 men between the ages of 36 and 45 years, and their level of education ranged from high school to PhD degree holders. Their occupation ranged from unemployed civil service employees to entrepreneurs. Among the men, two were not married. Lastly, there were 18 youths between the ages of 18 and 35 years, and their level of education ranged from high school to bachelor's level. All of them were unmarried.

The discussions lasted for approximately 90 min and took place in a convenient venue preferred by the participants, which in all cases was the home of one of the participants. Before starting, the researcher explained the purpose of the research and some basic rules and conditions (e.g., not interrupting when someone is talking, assuring that data were collected anonymously). All participants gave their oral consent.

The focus groups were led by the first author, a female Cameroonian studying abroad and a potential returnee, which may have impacted the discussions with community members. First, this profile was a facilitator of the discussion since it was easy to establish a trustful atmosphere because of the researcher's familiarity with the language and culture. Second, having the identity of a bushfaller may have affected the responses such that some participants may have either exaggerated or muted some views.

All the discussions were audio-taped, literally transcribed, and coded for recurring themes in three stages. The data analysis was inductive, and in doing this, codes were generated from the data rather than predetermined. The constant comparison analysis was used to analyse the data in three main stages [52]. The first stage consisted of open coding without limiting the number of codes on the topic of community expectations towards returned migrants. At this stage, for example, codes were associated with the participants' definition of a bushfaller, expectations related to gender, and considerations about their mode of return, level of education, and number of years spent abroad. In the second stage, the coded data were regrouped into two categories indicating those returnees considered success stories and those regarded as failures. The standards used to differentiate between success and failure allowed us to analyse what is concretely expected from returnees. Lastly, themes were developed that helped us to display concrete expectations; to explain how they arise, differ and evolve; and to shed light on their impact. All these revealed what members of the community expect from people returning to Cameroon.

In what follows, we delve into the empirical findings. First, we explore the different categories of returnees at the community level, as this increases clarity on who is labelled as bushfallers in the context of return. Second, we discuss the specific expectations of local community members towards bushfallers. In the third section, we question if the mode of return and gender matter in these expectations. Lastly, we give a conclusion to the findings and policy implications.

4. Unpacking the Different Categories of Returned Migrants

During the focus group discussions with community members, when asked, how do you call someone who is returning home after being away from Cameroon for so long? There was an absurd silence to what, perhaps, was a strange question. After clarifications, there was a unanimous response of bushfaller with loud laughter. However, in the male focus group in Buea, Eric—who was married and at the time unemployed—interrupted the laughter by stating:

> *I think that the whole idea of bushfalling depends on the resources the person comes back with, and I will expect them to come back home "fine" because someone can come*

from South Africa or even Equatorial Guinea with a lot of resources and can be called a bushfaller.

Eric's view stimulated disagreements within the group as other group members emphasised that specific destination countries were taken into consideration. After further probing, it became clear, especially in the groups consisting of men and youths, that labels of "hustlers", "adventurers", "voyageurs" and "bushfallers" are used in everyday parlance to refer to people who travelled out of Cameroon. The group discussions revealed how these categorisations also last after people's return and are shaping community expectations towards returnees. This section zooms into the meanings of these different categorisations and how community members differentiated them from the most prestigious category of "bushfallers".

First, the term "hustlers" was used to refer to people who travel to other African societies, such as Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea. According to Sandra—married and a civil servant from the women's focus group in Buea—hustlers do not have fixed destinations, implying that, whenever they hear of an opportunity, they attempt by all means possible to go there, an interpretation that was echoed in the youth focus group in Buea. The "opportunities" stressed here referred to either a job or a means to Europe. This prompted loud laughter within the group, and Shay, another male youth participant, followed up with the discussion and illustrated what it might take for a "hustler" to become a "bushfaller", which was the highest category any migrant could attain:

Those who go to Europe by boats are not bushfallers but rather hustlers, but if they finally arrive in Europe and succeed to have "papers" in the country, they will be considered as "bushfallers".

The above statement shows how differentiation is made between those who went by air and boat. Sometimes, without knowing the difference, they juxtaposed crossing the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean to emphasise the difference between bushfallers and hustlers. Moreover, by pinpointing that people who travelled to Europe by boat ought to have a legal stay to be considered a bushfaller points to their knowledge of the structural barriers they have to circumvent to regularise their stay. This also means that community members know that such journeys through the boat are characterised by periods of uncertainty, waiting, and hopes [54]. In this way, their views confirm not only the multidirectionality and fragmentation that characterise migration trajectories [55] but also points to the "temporal boundaries and structures that shape the migrant experience" [56] (p. 268). By acknowledging these specific migration trajectories, community members indicated how they judge returnees based on the societies they returned from and what to expect from them. However, it is also important to note that in Africa, going abroad has become intertwined with the idea of going to "hustle"—referring to seeking one's fortune [57]. This implies that even people regarded as bushfallers by community members may, however, still refer to themselves as "hustlers" in everyday conversation. Migrants use the label "hustler" while in the destination society to point to their efforts to be successful.

A second group mentioned specifically amongst the focus groups of youths in Buea and Yaoundé were those travelling to the United Arabs Emirates (UAE). Although the UEA has become a popular destination for Cameroonians due to the high demand for foreign labour [58], Carl—single in Buea, who experienced a failed migration journey and was unemployed—was quick to label them as "tourist hustlers". He substantiated his view by pinpointing their activities on social media (such as Facebook and Instagram) while abroad. They spent much time posting pictures of their extravagant lifestyles or places they visited. As a result, this changed these people from "bushfallers" into "tourist hustlers".

Society has given us a very biased way to look at bushfallers. Due to the prominence of social media, many people sit at their homes and define themselves as bushfallers. For example, people returning from Dubai . . . . Anyway, anyone who goes to Dubai and returns even twenty times are not successful bushfallers. They are "tourist hustlers"!

The other group members agreed with him and decried such activities, raising their voices in anger and standing from their seats to explain their viewpoints, given that this displayed wealth did not reflect in the lives of their family members at home. Moreover, according to them, upon return, these "tourist hustlers" would attempt to live up to the lifestyle portrayed in the social media rather than doing something that was framed as "substantial", such as improving the lives of their families and owning an investment. With a loud tone, Steve—a university student in the youth focus group in Buea—referred to tourist hustlers as "hush puppies" since they assumed their money was gotten through fraudulent means. Hush puppies is a modified word for *feymania* (con artistry). Pelican [45] argues that it is linked to migration and has become a popular imaginary of success, especially among unemployed youths. Moreover, while Appadurai [59] already hinted at the influence of social media in the self-making process of migrants, in the case of Cameroon, it also heightens community expectations towards them. As we explain later, community members linked this social media performance to the evolution of bushfalling. Previously, there was the dominance of looking "worldly"—meaning dressing and talking in a particular way [35,44]. Today, the emphasis is on doing something substantial at the community level.

Thirdly, the term "adventurers" was used in all focus groups for those people who travel within the African continent but for specific purposes. This is different from how it is understood in the French equivalent, where expressions such as "*aller au font, aller se battre*" (i.e., to go to the front, to go into battle) are used to translate the challenges and dangers migrants may experience as well as how they navigate all the challenges to be successful abroad [45]. However, as explained by Boris—married and a university lecturer in the men's focus group in Buea:

> *Regarding those who go for adventures within Africa, it is usually for particular purposes such as a construction job in Equatorial Guinea, and they return immediately after fulfilling the purpose.*

Adventurers are usually not cut off from the eyes of the community for long, implying that their stay in the destination country is typically brief, especially compared to bushfallers. While Boris was speaking, other participants agreed by nodding. They contributed to the discussions by noting that, unlike bushfallers whose visits require much preparation, adventurers can visit at any time with little or no expectations from members of the community.

Finally, to build upon this, another participant, Elvis—married and an entrepreneur—mentioned those called "voyageurs" who have the financial means to travel from one country to the other without visa restrictions. This group of people are mainly business owners and university professors and are respected within the community. Some of them may have even been abroad (bush) at some point in their lives but have returned and successfully reintegrated into communal life and are not regarded as "bushfallers". Due to the prestige associated with bushfalling, community members preferred and expected more from bushfallers than voyageurs. Thus, they attached more value to the label of a bushfaller than voyageurs since voyageurs are just like "one of them" within the community with no resources to spare.

Hence, the views expressed by members of the community pinpoint the complexities involved in understanding who can be regarded as a bushfaller. The categorisation was based on the visa regimes of the destination societies implying that the more cumbersome it is to obtain a visa, the more prestigious is the society, and thus the higher the expectations. Therefore, despite the emergence of new destinations (such as South Africa, China, UAE), the traditional bush destinations remain the United Kingdom, USA, Canada, France, and Germany. Moreover, to substantiate this, Valery—single and a business owner in the men focus group Yaoundé—explained that due to his interactions with bushfallers, not all Western countries should be considered as "bush". Importantly, for him, they analyse the economies of the destination countries. Everyone in the group agreed with laughter to this. They exempted countries such as Hungary and Ukraine, implying that people returning

from these destinations will face less scrutiny from community members. Thus, being considered a bushfaller appeared to be more than travelling to Europe or North America. It was only reserved for people who spent their time abroad in particular societies and was connected to their migration motives and the desired outcomes, which was linked to an increase in social status through the accumulation and distribution of wealth. As such, there are several passages required to attain the label, ranging from crossing physical borders (in the case of those who went by boats) to obtaining a legal stay. This means that aspiring bushfallers can move between categories, implying that there are temporal dimensions ingrained in all the categories. Thus, attaining the label of a bushfaller is the highest category, and meeting the expectations attached to it is the definition of success at the community level.

On top of all these, another participant, Ernest, married and a teacher, in the men's focus group in Buea, narrated his experience with his bushfaller friend from Europe whom he accompanied for a funeral in a peri-urban town, and word spread around that the friend was a bushfaller. With no knowledge that everyone knew about his identity as a bushfaller, Ernest's friend offered a gift of XOF 2000 (about EUR 3) to someone. The money was received with disapproval and with the response, "what type of bushfaller is this? He returned from abroad D". Thus, according to Ernest, his friend was immediately perceived as a failure and sarcastically categorised as someone not returning from the real bush destinations (i.e., abroad D). Based on this, Ernest pointed out that the expectations towards returnees also depend on the return location. While Ernest was explaining, there was a silence which indicated that they agreed with him. The other participants noted that in urban areas (where data was collected for this research), people are familiar with bushfallers, which makes their perspectives different when compared to people in rural areas who have limited contacts with returnees and rarely differentiate the destination societies, commonly called the "whiteman kontri". Nyamnjoh and Page [60], in explaining young Cameroonians' allure to modernity, use "whiteman kontri" to refer to "an imagined realm occupied by people, and sometimes located in the West or Europe" (p. 608). These scholars provide an illuminating analysis of the Cameroonian representation of "whiteness" by highlighting its ambivalent image—repulsive but a source of material comfort and power. This shapes the imaginaries of success in the bush by Cameroonians, as evident in the social categories used to identify returned migrants. More so, in Cameroon, this imagination of success is evident in the modern forms of consumerism, where consuming foreign goods is crucial in defining status. As such, migrants are seen as "disposable wallets on legs" and in "greener pastures", where personal success is recognised when they redistribute their wealth [61].

The above analysis shows that the categorisation of migrants by community members influenced their expectations towards people returning to the community. We continue with exploring the concrete expectations towards returnees identified as bushfallers.

5. On Being Visible and Creating an Impact after Return

5.1. Being Visible

Community members revealed that for returned bushfallers to be considered as successful, they ought to be visible and create an impact in the community after their return. This was succinctly stated by Ben—married and unemployed in the men focus group in Buea. The quote below illustrates that returnees have to demonstrate these qualities at the individual level and the community level.

> *When someone falls bush, we believe that it is better than Cameroon. You can't say you are a bushfaller, and you come back with nothing because the difference between you and someone who has never travelled ought to be visible. Bushfallers should do some flashing, make it rain and bling. They should have the ability to take care of themselves and also impact the lives of the underprivileged (widows and orphans).*

Immediately after their return, returnees can attain visibility which, according to community members in all focus groups, is through offering gifts (such as t-shirts, perfumes,

and shoes) and drinks and through the ways they dress after return. Fulfilling this was the first step to be accepted into the community. This was also considered an indication that they are financially independent, which raises the hopes that they returned with many resources to continue providing for their families and engaging in community development.

Further, returnees' visibility was measured in terms of an increase in the living standards of their families. According to all community members in Buea and Yaoundé, supporting their families was crucial since this was considered one of the main goals of travelling abroad. According to Marie, a business owner and widow in the women focus group in Yaoundé,

> *Before a bushfaller returns, his/her family situation must have changed from how he left them before travelling. The bushfaller does not have to return before trying to upgrade his/her family. For example, he should send his siblings to school, build and renovate his/her father's house. This is because when someone travels, the family is counting on him since their status depends on him (the bushfaller).*

This was a sensitive topic in all focus groups, as the participants narrated stories of the financial sacrifices by parents for their children to travel abroad. This was also indicative of the current Cameroon context plagued by socio-economic uncertainties. Moreover, the sentiments raised by the participants reflect the findings by Nyamnjoh [61], where he uses the metaphor of "*nyongo*" to capture the excessive demands for remittances from bushfallers and explains that, being in the "whiteman kontri", they are seen as long-term investments. Owing to this, the participants noted that an improvement in the living standards of returnees' families is a direct reflection of the returnees' success, which is the second step of the community's assessment. According to the community members, if their families lived in a thatched house before their departure, upon arrival, it should look modern (storey building), accompanied by improved living conditions. Houses mirror a migrant's success [5] and are an important aspect of the material culture in Cameroon because they are to be built and decorated in particular ways that are different from other houses within the community and thus can be easily identified as houses owned by bushfallers. This confirms other studies that indicate that houses are the immediate and the most convincing aspect of migration to those who stay behind [62].

Apart from the houses, the returnees' siblings ought to be educated, and if possible, enabled to travel, and if his/her parent was engaged in petty trading, they should not be doing it again. Although this form of support has to continue after returning, an exception is made for people who supported their families while away but experienced an unexpected halt to their migration journeys (such as deportation). In such cases, these returnees will be considered successful since an evident change in the lives of his/her family can be seen.

Further, the participants mentioned returnees who travelled for studies, and it was highly debated in the focus groups regarding what was expected from them after their return. Most participants, especially in the group consisting of men, saw no difference between those who went for studies and others who went for work since they were in bush destinations. On the one hand, they expected those who left for studies to have a high salaried job after returning, given the prestige of having a Western certificate. On the other hand, they regarded education as having no value by noting that most people who provided for their families had no formal education. As stated by Nathan, married and an accountant and in the focus group of men in Yaoundé:

> *Success is mostly financial and the ability to share their resources. Regarding educational qualifications, we do not even see that as being significant because if someone has a PhD and cannot impact our lives in any way, then that means nothing to us. What we need is to benefit materially.*

The other group members supported his view and considered it a shame for people to study abroad and return with nothing to show off. Their views on highly educated returnees with no job offers were due to their disdain towards people who remain dependent after their return, considering that travelling abroad was interpreted as an increase in social

status. Moreover, the issue of education was also highlighted in the focus group of women in Buea, as pointed out by Bih, who is married and has a sibling abroad. According to her, the sibling has a low level of education, and he "hustled" in the bush and is financially more viable than highly educated people. However, other participants who have friends and siblings abroad disagreed by noting that people who travel for studies have limited hours to work, so less should be expected from them.

What is more, the different views expressed by community members on returnees who travelled for studies reflect the evolution of bushfalling. Previously, other notions such as "America wanda" and "been to" were used, with the former referring to people who travelled to the United States mainly for studies but decided the stay and integrate into the society [44]. The latter notion was used to refer to elite members of the postcolonial era who studied abroad and, after returning, had white-collar jobs with the Cameroon government or international organisations [45]. While these terms were mainly linked to educational achievement, our findings confirm the research by Pelican, Tatah, and Ndjio [39], which illustrates that they are now replaced by "bushfalling" and, hence, inherently linked self-enrichment and the continuous flow of remittances.

The finding that the role of education is downplayed as an achievement in bushfalling highlights the economic precarity faced by Cameroonians, given the emphasis on the overt display of wealth as an outcome of migration. Moreover, this indicates that despite specific bushfalling destinations, it has also levelled the playing field in terms of the profiles of people who can impact the family and community levels. As such, Nyamnjoh [44] provides evidence of this in his work on the identity of Cameroonian bushfallers by pinpointing that "education is not always the priority, but the priority is making money" (p. 705).

However, in the long term, to identify successful returnees, attention was paid to people who performed concrete activities in the community. As shall be explained below, returnees, who created businesses/investments, worked a high-paying job, and implemented some changes within the community were considered to be successful.

5.2. Creating an Impact

In all focus group discussions, the participants noted the importance for bushfallers to create an impact after their return. To emphasise this, Shella—married and a teacher in the focus group of women in Yaoundé—stated:

> *Gone are those days when all we want is for a bushfaller to return with a car. We do not care about that anymore. We expect that he should buy a piece of land and build a house, and with that, he will gain some respect.*

Using the personal pronoun "we" when talking, Shella established a common communicative ground, which led the other participants to nod in agreement with her viewpoint. Thus, Hariet—single and an entrepreneur—reiterated that a successful bushfaller is recognised through his investments and gave an example of a returnee from the UK whom all the group members seemed to know by nodding their heads. According to Hariet, the returnee, who is also a medical doctor, is engaged in community activities by organising training for young people on how to start a business or improve their skills. Moreover, to create an impact, community members in Buea emphasised that they ought to know how the community functions by being a part of it. As part of their preparations before returning, they were expected to visit their families often or keep in contact with members of the community. By doing these, they will be aware of the changes occurring in the community and will know in what ways to assist in its development. They illustrated this by stating that if a returnee discovers that the community needs basic amenities such as pipe-borne water and schools, he can bring the community together to resolve the issue. This, according to them, was because by travelling out of the country, they have been exposed to another "world" and may have developed some networks which may facilitate charity donations towards the development of the community.

However, there was some scepticism in the focus groups of the youths and men in Buea regarding the impact a bushfaller could create depending on his/her job and source of

income. On the one hand, as mentioned above, among the youths, there was anger towards "hush puppies" whose priority is living flamboyantly. On the other hand, Francis—married and a teacher in the men's focus group—narrated an encounter with a returned bushfaller who, on a night out, spent XOF 2.6 million (approx. EUR 3900) and changed his car every three months. People told Francis that the bushfaller does business. As stated by Francis, "during my interaction with the bushfaller, not even one sentence on business comes out from his mouth which raises a lot of questions to the source of his wealth, and since he cannot add any value to the society, he is a failure". After Francis explained this, the room was filled with laughter, and the participants emphasised the importance of the type of business the bushfaller creates. At this point, Mark—married, who is also an entrepreneur—followed up with the conversation and shared his experience with bushfallers who always say (in pidgin English), "I want open some snack bar weh na die" (I will open a luxurious restaurant which will be hard to find), without any action.

Nonetheless, in all the focus groups, there was the importance of returning with financial resources with the crucial aspect of using these resources to impact lives. As such, returnees were to be entrepreneurial by creating jobs, thereby reducing unemployment. As stated by Ben, an unemployed university graduate in the focus group of men in Yaoundé:

> *We expect that when bushfallers come back, they should at least create job opportunities for members of the community, even if it is contractual. For example, if he wants to build a house for his father, he can employ people within the community.*

The expectation of returnees to create job opportunities was reflected in the other groups whereby community members confirmed that by doing this, the returnee is considered successful since he returned with material things and knowledge and skills that can create a change in the community. Moreover, this was an indication that they were financially independent, and as such, they could contribute financially towards community projects. This echoes the findings in Senegal, where returnees were expected to engage in "growth-oriented investments which are opportunity-driven, face entry barriers, require specialisation, and involve risk-taking" [63] (p. 94). In substantiating their views, all community members in Buea and Yaoundé cited returnees whom they believed were embodiments of success because they either invested in large-scale agriculture or even taught income-generating skills to members of the community. Another group of returnees often quoted were those involved in charitable works, such as sponsoring less privileged children and providing free medical consultations (for those who returned after obtaining a medical license).

In contrast, community members attributed "survivalist businesses"—"businesses driven by necessity, which require limited skills, capital, and technology, are easy to enter, are part of household diversification strategies and aim at maximising security" [63] (p. 94)—to those who returned empty-handed and were considered failures. These businesses were a means for the returnees to "begin all over" after a failed migration project. Indeed, these businesses were ideal for adventurers and hustlers from transit countries (Mali, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia) who did not succeed to get to Europe or North America.

This reminds us of Åkesson and Eriksson-Baaz's [64] critiques on the Eurocentric policy celebration of returnees to Africa as "new developers", which is too simplistic, as it does not account for the structural constraints in origin countries. However, in Cameroon, due to the deteriorating socio-economic context, our study indicates a similar perception of returnees as "new developers" by community members through the expected ability to be visible and create an impact after return as the ultimate definition of success. Pointing at the same structural constraints, both while abroad and after return, we argue that this seemed unrealistic. Through the community's emphasis on the importance of preparations before return, for example, through occasional visits, community members failed to acknowledge the difficulties many migrants face to access labour markets in destination societies and their inability to travel freely. At the same time, these heightened expectations result from the economic uncertainty and civil unrest plaguing most African countries, aligning with Akyeampong's [57] argument that this necessitates "the economic survival and prosperity

of families to become equally dependent on having family members in the diaspora" (p. 18). What is more, just as the notion of bushfalling has undergone changes due to the socio-economic situation, we believe that this can be the same for expectations towards returned migrants.

Thus, this study shows the complexity of understanding the notion of bushfalling and furthers insights into understanding the implications of international migration, which cannot be defined solely in economic terms [36]. The expectations of members of the community towards returnees have implications for status because migrants gain status ascription after leaving the country. However, upon return, they risk losing the status after assessments from members of their community. It is the achievement of the expectations that leads to an increase in their status. Returnees who cannot meet these expectations still keep the label of a bushfaller, though they turn into a failed bushfaller, which declines their status. More so, given the emphasis on the profitability of bushfalling, expectations were only lowered for an empty-handed return when returnees supported their families while abroad, and this had to be in the form of visible improvements. This implies that these returnees will retain the status and label of a bushfaller, which highlights again that there are many variables to be considered in understanding this complex notion.

6. Mode of Return and Gender

By highlighting returnees' contribution to development, community members did not adjust their expectations depending on the mode of return. Due to the profitability of bushfalling, the livelihood implications after the return of migrants and their families were more important than the mode of return. Instead, they judged returnees based on the resources they accumulated before their return. This implies that if someone returned voluntarily with no resources, he/she would go through the same mockery as a deportee who returned empty-handed. As a result of this, according to community members, returnees made their permanent return a secret by sometimes informing them that they came for a visit. This was clearly stated by Jr., a youth and university student in Yaoundé:

> *We rarely know when they are "sent back" because they tell many lies. So, it is mostly through gossips that we can have a clue, and that is sometimes after six months after we notice that they cannot fulfil their promises. We think most of them consider repatriation or returning empty-handed as a failure—that is why it is hidden from the community.*

This view was echoed in other focus groups whereby community members confirmed that due to the shame attached to returning empty-handed, most returnees consider remigration as a means of fulfilling their obligations towards their families. However, in the youth focus group in Buea, the participants agreed that, for returnees who cannot remigrate or stay in another community, the only option was to reintegrate into their origin communities. To achieve this, they had to make efforts to socialise with community members, such as greeting and visiting, participating in community events, and being honest about the reasons for their return. Nevertheless, Kurt—married and a police officer in the men's focus group in Yaoundé—disagreed with other participants in his group who were hasty to call a bushfaller a failure if he returned with no resources. He then gave an example of a neighbour known by the other group members. According to him, the neighbour studied engineering in Paris, and after losing his job there, he returned to Cameroon and stayed for seven years doing nothing. During that time, everyone called him a failure, yet this changed when there was an opportunity that required his expertise acquired abroad. Now he currently works for the African Union. The other participants listened with some nodding in disagreement. They questioned how his family survived throughout the seven years of no work and emphasised the importance to be financially independent after return.

Interestingly, when members of the community were unable to determine returnees' mode of return, they were assumed to have been deported. Therefore, at the level of the community, two types of returnees were seen: those who returned with resources and those who returned empty-handed. It was difficult for community members to comprehend how someone who succeeds to travel to the "land of opportunities" will return by choice

and do so empty-handed. People who returned empty-handed were seen as lazy and often compared with others who became successful abroad after persevering with no legal stay. Undoubtedly, these expectations towards returnees may explain why some returnees decide not to return to their communities of origin [65].

Further, community members gave a nuanced and sometimes contradictory understanding of the role of gender in determining their expectations. On the one hand, in the youths focus groups, they stated that "we expect the same things from men and women as far as they have the label of a bushfaller", which reveals that all returnees have to be financially independent. On the other hand, community members of men and youths in Yaoundé and Buea indicated that being married is an element of "success" for women because the community does not expect much from them as their impact is limited to their immediate and extended families. They stressed women's reproductive role, emphasising the role of men as the natural breadwinners and, at the same time, frowned on women who prioritised their careers over marriage and called themselves "independent". Adam, married and a teacher in the men's focus group in Buea, succinctly stated:

> *When a woman returns, we do not expect much from her, but for men, the expectations are always higher. It will suffice for women to provide us with material things such as shoes, dresses, body sprays, etc., from "bush". However, we prefer that men should return with hard currency.*

However, in the focus groups of women, emphasis was on the difference between bushfallers who returned married and others who were not married. In their view, those who are married gain respect in the community, unlike those who are not married and have no child. They associated getting married and having a child with having insurance during old age (i.e., someone to take care of them).

During the discussions, while economic autonomy and independence were celebrated for men, the focus groups of men negatively labelled women who claimed to be financially independent and not married. Returning women who challenged the cultural gender division of labour were assumed to be frustrated after their return, not because they were unsuccessful (financially), but because they returned to a society where the social norms have not changed (i.e., men are the breadwinners). As such, the participants in the men's focus group in Yaoundé pointed out two challenging expectations women face after return: on the one hand, they need to fulfil the purpose for which they had emigrated, and on the other, they should maintain the cultural norms by getting married and bearing children. Thus, these two diverse expectations might increase the vulnerability of the wellbeing of women after their return. This perception of women in the community parallels previous research in Cameroon, which revealed that women's empowerment (in the sense of equality with men in economic, social, and political life) is generally not welcomed. It is often "described as a concept that is Western, foreign or imported" [66] (p. 35).

Further, the participants' emphasis on marriage as a success factor for women could lead to stereotypes and re-produce (gender) inequalities, thereby inhibiting the reintegration of returnees. However, this is not to negate the fact that some men experience a "masculinity crisis" when they are unable to meet up with their role as breadwinners. Therefore, given that there are different categories of people returning to Cameroon with differing levels of preparation, it is without a doubt that these expectations may affect their wellbeing if they fail to demonstrate their socially ascribed gender roles. More so, these two diverse expectations illustrate the contradictory nature of bushfalling.

7. Conclusions

By analysing the specific expectations of local community members towards people returning to Cameroon and grasping the different elements on which they build, this article has disentangled how specific socio-cultural interpretations of migration relate to the socio-economic and political transformations within the Cameroonian society.

We noted that community members' expectations are shaped by the destination societies of migrants and visa regimes of the destination societies, not by the modes of people's

return. These expectations ingrained in the socio-cultural notion of bushfalling are intertwined with Cameroonians' imaginaries of success and gender expectations. The power of imaginaries is clearly articulated by Salazar [4], who stated that "imaginaries play a predominant role in envisioning both the green pastures and the (often mythologized) memory of the homeland" (p. 586). This paper showed that these imaginaries of success obligate (returned) migrants to be visible and to create an impact without taking into consideration the structural constraints returnees are confronted with. This translates to actively sending remittances before returning and engaging in development and philanthropy after returning. When these expectations are not met, it is met with frustration by community members, and the cultural norm of reciprocity is invoked when scrutinizing returned migrants in their capacity as family members. Moreover, this demonstrates that while migration projects often begin as individual and family projects, they transform into a community affair after returning.

These findings on how expectations are shaped are relevant for how we understand contemporary African mobility. Most African countries are still experiencing the effects of the structural adjustment measures of the 1980s and 90s, exacerbated by an ongoing political crisis in several countries. In the case of Togo, for example, the engaging ethnography of Piot [67] showed how the country's political climate, combined with the withdrawal of EU funding in the mid-2000s, has increased aspirations by disillusioned Togolese to leave their country through the Diversity Visa lottery. This example is not farfetched from situations in other African countries such as Cameroon [18] and Ghana [9], where previous research reveals that, due to the "messiness of their everyday realities", creating uncertain futures, people dream of "greener pastures", which could be internationally or within the continent [68]. We add to this by noting that this dire economic situation experienced by people who stay behind in origin countries also influences the expectations towards returnees by focusing the gaze entirely on livelihood implications. Therefore, this study extends our understanding of what it means to return to a society where the reception of migrants is based on socio-cultural interpretations of migration and return, which clearly differentiates from too-often-used Western policy categorisations of returnees based on their legal status.

Further research should focus on unpacking if the portrayal of fancy lives by migrants in social media leads to increased expectations and whether the lavish lifestyles of migrants during occasional visits jeopardise others' permanent return and their reintegration processes. More so, considering the high expectations towards returned migrants, combined with the crippling socio-economic and political context of Cameroon, which has been increased with civil unrest in Anglophone Cameroon since 2016 [36], the question arises how return migrants navigate these expectations and the structural changes in their reintegration processes.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, P.W. and I.L.; methodology, P.W., I.D. and I.L.; formal analysis, P.W.; investigation, P.W.; data curation, P.W.; writing—original draft preparation, P.W.; writing—review and editing, P.W., I.D. and I.L.; visualisation, I.D.; supervision, I.D. and I.L. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted according to guidelines of the ethics committee at Ghent University; it was approved by the same committee, Ethics reference number 2018/86, 30 July 2019.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Notes

[1] Buea is located in the southwest region of Cameroon and owes its size and dynamic character to the university constructed there in the early 1990s [35]. The Municipality of Buea has sixty-seven villages and four distinct identified urban spaces (Buea Station, Soppo, Molyko/Mile 17, and Muea). For this research, the neighbourhoods were randomly selected given the notion of bushfalling being popular in English-speaking Cameroon.

[2] Yaoundé, on the other hand, is the capital city of Cameroon and is made up of six districts—each consisting of several neighbourhoods [69]. Moreover, given that Yaoundé comprises several districts, this study focused on Yaoundé VI since the majority of its 270,000 inhabitants originate from the English-speaking regions [70].

[3] Cameroon has a long history of mobility both within and across its national borders [45], which has been educationally and economically motivated (in terms of informal cross-border activities, networks of trade, and labour migration).

References

1. Adey, P. If mobility is everything then it is nothing: Towards a relational politics of (im)mobilities. *Mobilities* **2006**, *1*, 75–94. [CrossRef]
2. Carling, J.; Collins, F. Aspiration, desire and drivers of migration. *J. Ethn. Migr. Stud.* **2018**, *44*, 909–926. [CrossRef]
3. Pantea, M.C. Social ties at work: Roma migrants and the community dynamics. *Ethn. Racial Stud.* **2013**, *36*, 1726–1744. [CrossRef]
4. Salazar, N.B. The power of imagination in transnational mobilities. *Identities* **2011**, *18*, 576–598. [CrossRef]
5. Carling, J.; Åkesson, L. Mobility at the heart of a nation: Patterns and meanings of Cape Verdean migration. *Int. Migr.* **2009**, *47*, 124–155. [CrossRef]
6. Tazanu, P.M. On the liveness of mobile phone mediation: Youth expectations of remittances and narratives of discontent in the Cameroonian transnational family. *Mob. Media Commun.* **2015**, *3*, 20–35. [CrossRef]
7. Collins, F.L. Desire as a theory for migration studies: Temporality, assemblage and becoming in the narratives of migrants. *J. Ethn. Migr. Stud.* **2018**, *44*, 964–980. [CrossRef]
8. Bredeloup, S. The figure of the adventurer as an African migrant. *J. Afr. Cult. Stud.* **2013**, *25*, 170–182. [CrossRef]
9. Kleist, N. Disrupted migration projects: The moral economy of involuntary return to Ghana from Libya. *Africa* **2017**, *87*, 322–342. [CrossRef]
10. Wanki, P.E.; Lietaert, I. 'Bushfalling': The ambiguities of role identities experienced by self-sponsored Cameroonian students in Flanders (Belgium). *Identities* **2019**, *26*, 725–743. [CrossRef]
11. Fleischer, A. Family, obligations, and migration. *Demogr. Res.* **2007**, *16*, 413–440. [CrossRef]
12. Roth, C. Shameful! The inverted intergenerational contract in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso. In *Generations in Africa: Connections and Conflicts*; Alber, E., van der Geest, S., Whyte, S.R., Eds.; Lit Verlag: Berlin, Germany, 2008; pp. 47–69.
13. Olwig, K.F. The "successful" return: Caribbean narratives of migration, family, and gender. *J. R. Anthropol. Inst.* **2012**, *18*, 828–845. [CrossRef]
14. Prothmann, S. Migration, masculinity and social class: Insights from Pikine, Senegal. *Int. Migr.* **2018**, *56*, 96–108. [CrossRef]
15. Åkesson, L.; Carling, J.; Drotbohm, H. Mobility, Moralities and Motherhood: Navigating the Contingencies of Cape Verdean Lives. *J. Ethn. Migr. Stud.* **2012**, *38*, 237–260. [CrossRef]
16. Gamburd, M.R. Milk teeth and jet planes: Kin relations in families of Sri Lanka's transnational domestic servants. *City Soc.* **2008**, *20*, 5–31. [CrossRef]
17. Kleist, N. Trajectories of involuntary return migration to Ghana: Forced relocation processes and post-return life. *Geoforum* **2018**, 1–10. [CrossRef]
18. Alpes, M.J. Imagining a future in "bush": Migration aspirations at times of crisis in Anglophone Cameroon. *Identities* **2014**, *21*, 259–274. [CrossRef]
19. Jackson, M. The shock of the new: Migrant imaginaries and critical transitions. *Ethnos* **2008**, *73*, 57–72. [CrossRef]
20. Sinatti, G. "Mobile transmigrants" or "unsettled returnees"? myth of return and permanent resettlement among Senegalese migrants. *Popul. Space Place* **2011**, *17*, 153–166. [CrossRef]
21. Lietaert, I.; Kuschminder, K. Contextualizing and conceptualizing reintegration processes in the context of return. *Int. Migr.* **2021**, 1–8. [CrossRef]
22. Drotbohm, H. On the durability and the decomposition of citizenship: The social logics of forced return migration in cape verde. *Citizensh. Stud.* **2011**, *15*, 381–396. [CrossRef]
23. Schuster, L.; Majidi, N. What happens post-deportation? The experience of deported Afghans. *Migr. Stud.* **2013**, *1*, 221–240. [CrossRef]
24. Peutz, N. Embarking on an Anthropology of Removal. *Curr. Anthropol.* **2006**, *47*, 217–241. [CrossRef]
25. Drotbohm, H. The Reversal of Migratory Family Lives: A Cape Verdean Perspective on Gender and Sociality pre- and post-deportation. *J. Ethn. Migr. Stud.* **2015**, *41*, 653–670. [CrossRef]
26. Rodriguez, A. Three stories about living without migration in Dakar: Coming to terms with the contradictions of the moral economy. *Africa* **2015**, *85*, 333–355. [CrossRef]
27. Miller, O.A. Deportation as a Process of Irreversible Transformation. *J. Ethn. Migr. Stud.* **2012**, *38*, 131–146. [CrossRef]
28. De Jong, G.F. Expectations, gender, and norms in migration decision-making. *Popul. Stud.* **2000**, *54*, 307–319. [CrossRef]

29. Mahler, S.J.; Pessar, P.R. Gender Matters: Ethnographers Bring Gender from the Periphery toward the Core of Migration Studies. *Int. Migr. Rev.* **2006**, *40*, 27–63. [CrossRef]
30. Kuschminder, K. Female Return Migration and Reintegration Strategies in Ethiopia. Ph.D. Thesis, Maastrict University, Maastrict, The Netherlands, 2013.
31. Markowitz, F.; Stefansson, H.A. *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*; Lexington Books: Lanham, MD, USA, 2004; ISBN 978-0739109526.
32. Salazar, N.B. Theorizing mobility through concepts and figures. *Tempo Soc.* **2018**, *30*, 153–168. [CrossRef]
33. Jua, N. Differential responses to disappearing transitional pathways: Redefining possibility among Cameroonian youths. *Afr. Stud. Rev.* **2003**, *46*, 13–36. [CrossRef]
34. Konings, P.; Nyamnjoh, F. The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon. *Mod. Afr. Stud.* **1997**, *35*, 207–229. [CrossRef]
35. Alpes, M.J. *Bushfalling: How Young Cameroonians Dare to Migrate*; Universiteit van Amsterdam: Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2011.
36. Nyamnjoh, H. Ambitions of Bushfalling through Further Education: Insights from Students in Cameroonian Universities. *Soc. Inclusiom* **2021**, *9*, 196–206. [CrossRef]
37. Johnson-Hanks, J. On the limits of life stages in ethnography: Toward a theory of vital conjunctures. *Am. Anthropol.* **2002**, *104*, 865–880. [CrossRef]
38. Konings, P. The Post-Colonial State and Economic and Political Reforms in Cameroon. In *Liberalization in the Developing World: Institutional and Economic Changes in Latin America, Africa and Asia*; Fernandez Jilberto, A.M., Ed.; Routledge: London, UK, 1996; pp. 207–229.
39. Pelican, M.; Tatah, P.; Ndjio, B. Local perspectives on transnational relations of Cameroonian migrants. *African Sociol. Rev. / Rev. Africaine Sociol.* **2010**, *12*, 117–127. [CrossRef]
40. Orock, R.T.E. Manyu youths, belonging and the antinomies of patrimonial elite politics in contemporary Cameroon. *Cult. Dyn.* **2013**, *25*, 269–290. [CrossRef]
41. Mbembe, A.; Roitman, J. Figures of the Subject in Times of Crisis. *Public Cult.* **1995**, *7*, 323–352. [CrossRef]
42. Fokwang, J. Ambiguous Transitions: Mediating Citizenship Among Youths in Cameroon. *Africa Dev.* **2005**, *28*. [CrossRef]
43. Fokwang, J. Politics at the margins: Alternative sites of political involvement among young people in Cameroon. *Can. J. Afr. Stud.* **2016**, *50*, 211–228. [CrossRef]
44. Nyamnjoh, F.B. Cameroonian bushfalling: Negotiation of identity and belonging in fiction and ethnography. *Am. Ethnol.* **2011**, *38*, 701–713. [CrossRef]
45. Pelican, M. International Migration: Virtue or Vice? Perspectives from Cameroon. *J. Ethn. Migr. Stud.* **2013**, *39*, 237–258. [CrossRef]
46. Allman, D. Community centrality and social science research. *Anthropol. Med.* **2015**, *22*, 217–233. [CrossRef]
47. Williams, B. The Concept of Community. *Rev. Anthropol.* **2002**, *31*, 339–350. [CrossRef]
48. MacQueen, K.M.; McLellan, E.; Metzger, D.S.; Kegeles, S.; Strauss, R.P.; Scotti, R.; Blanchard, L.; Trotter II, T.R. What is community? An evidence-based definition for participatory public health. *Am. J. Public Health* **2001**, *91*, 1929–1938. [CrossRef]
49. Poland, M.; Maré, D.C. *Defining Geographic Communities*; Motu Working Paper No. 05-09; Motu Economic and Policy Research Trust: Wellington, New Zealand, 2005; p. 31.
50. McMillan, D.W.; Chavis, D.M. Sense of community: A definition and theory. *J. Community Psychol.* **1986**, *14*, 6–23. [CrossRef]
51. Allen, L. Managing masculinity: Young men's identity work in focus groups. *Qual. Res.* **2005**, *5*, 35–57. [CrossRef]
52. Onwuegbuzie, A.J.; Dickinson, W.B.; Leech, N.L.; Zoran, A.G. A Qualitative Framework for Collecting and Analyzing Data in Focus Group Research. *Int. J. Qual. Methods* **2009**, *8*, 1–21. [CrossRef]
53. Farnsworth, J.; Boon, B. Analysing group dynamics within the focus group. *Qual. Res.* **2010**, *10*, 605–624. [CrossRef]
54. Thorsen, D. Is Europe really the dream ? Contingent paths among sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. *Africa* **2017**, *87*, 343–361. [CrossRef]
55. Schapendonk, J. Turbulent Trajectories: African Migrants on Their Way to the European Union. *Societies* **2012**, *2*, 27–41. [CrossRef]
56. Acedera, K.A.; Yeoh, B.S.A. 'Making time': Long-distance marriages and the temporalities of the transnational family. *Curr. Sociol.* **2019**, *67*, 250–272. [CrossRef]
57. Akyeampong, E. Africans in the Diaspora: The Diaspora and Africa. *Afr. Aff.* **2000**, *99*, 183–215. [CrossRef]
58. Pelican, M.; Tatah, P. Migration to the Gulf States and China: Local perspectives from Cameroon. *Afr. Diaspora* **2009**, *2*, 229–244.
59. Appadurai, A. *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*; Minneapolis: London, UK, 1996; Volume 1.
60. Nyamnjoh, F.B.; Page, B. Whiteman Kontri and the Enduring Allure of Modernity among Cameroonian Youth. *Afr. Aff.* **2002**, *101*, 607–634. [CrossRef]
61. Nyamnjoh, F.B. Images of Nyongo amongst Bamenda Grassfielders in Whiteman Kontri. *Citizensh. Stud.* **2005**, *9*, 241–269. [CrossRef]
62. Graw, K.; Schielke, S. Introduction: Reflections on migratory expectations in Africa and beyond. In *The Global Horizon: Expectations of Migration in Africa and the Middle East*; Graw, K., Schielke, S., Eds.; Leuven University Press: Leuven, Belgium, 2012; pp. 7–22.
63. Sinatti, G.; Horst, C. Migrants as agents of development: Diaspora engagement discourse and practice in Europe. *Ethnicities* **2015**, *15*, 134–152. [CrossRef]
64. Åkesson, L.; Eriksson-Baaz, M. (Eds.) *Africa's Return Migrants: The New Developers?* Zed Books: London, UK, 2015; ISBN 9781783602346.

65. Van Meeteren, M.; Engbersen, G.; Snel, E.; Faber, M. Understanding Different Post-Return Experiences. *Comp. Migr. Stud.* **2014**, *2*, 335–360. [CrossRef]
66. Endeley, J.B. Conceptualising Women's Empowerment in Societies in Cameroon: How Does Money Fit In? *Gend. Dev.* **2001**, *9*, 34–41. [CrossRef]
67. Piot, C. *The Fixer: Visa Lottery Chronicles*; Duke University Press Books: Durham, NC, USA, 2019; ISBN 9781478003427.
68. Nyamnjoh, F.B. Fiction and reality of mobility in Africa. *Citizensh. Stud.* **2013**, *17*, 653–680. [CrossRef]
69. Socpa, A. *Démocratisation et Autochonie au Cameroun. Trajectoires Regionals Divergentes*; LIT Verlag: Munster, Germany, 2003; ISBN 9783825869977.
70. Onguéné Essono, L.M. Yaoundé, Une Métropole Francophone: Essai de Description D'un Foyer Linguistique en Construction; Le Français en Afrique—Revue du Réseau des Observatoires du Français Contemporain en Afrique. 2016. Available online: https://liseo.france-education-international.fr/index.php?lvl=notice_display&id=39317 (accessed on 28 October 2021).